

The Public Health Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic in Cambridge

COVID-19 WEEKLY REPORT

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

JANUARY 11, 2021



Cambridge
Public Health
Department



CHA Cambridge
Health Alliance



Massachusetts Cities Comparison

City/Town	Average Daily Incident Rate per 100,000 (14 days*)	
	December 31 Report	January 7 Report
Boston	54.9	57.4
Cambridge	26.0	26.8
Lowell	91.1	78.8
Newton	24.3	29.4
Somerville	39.0	39.4
Springfield	76.3	77.9
Worcester	76.3	76.8
State	58.3	61.1

*14-day period reflects 12/13-20-12/26/20 (Dec. 31 Report) and 12/20/20-1/2/21)

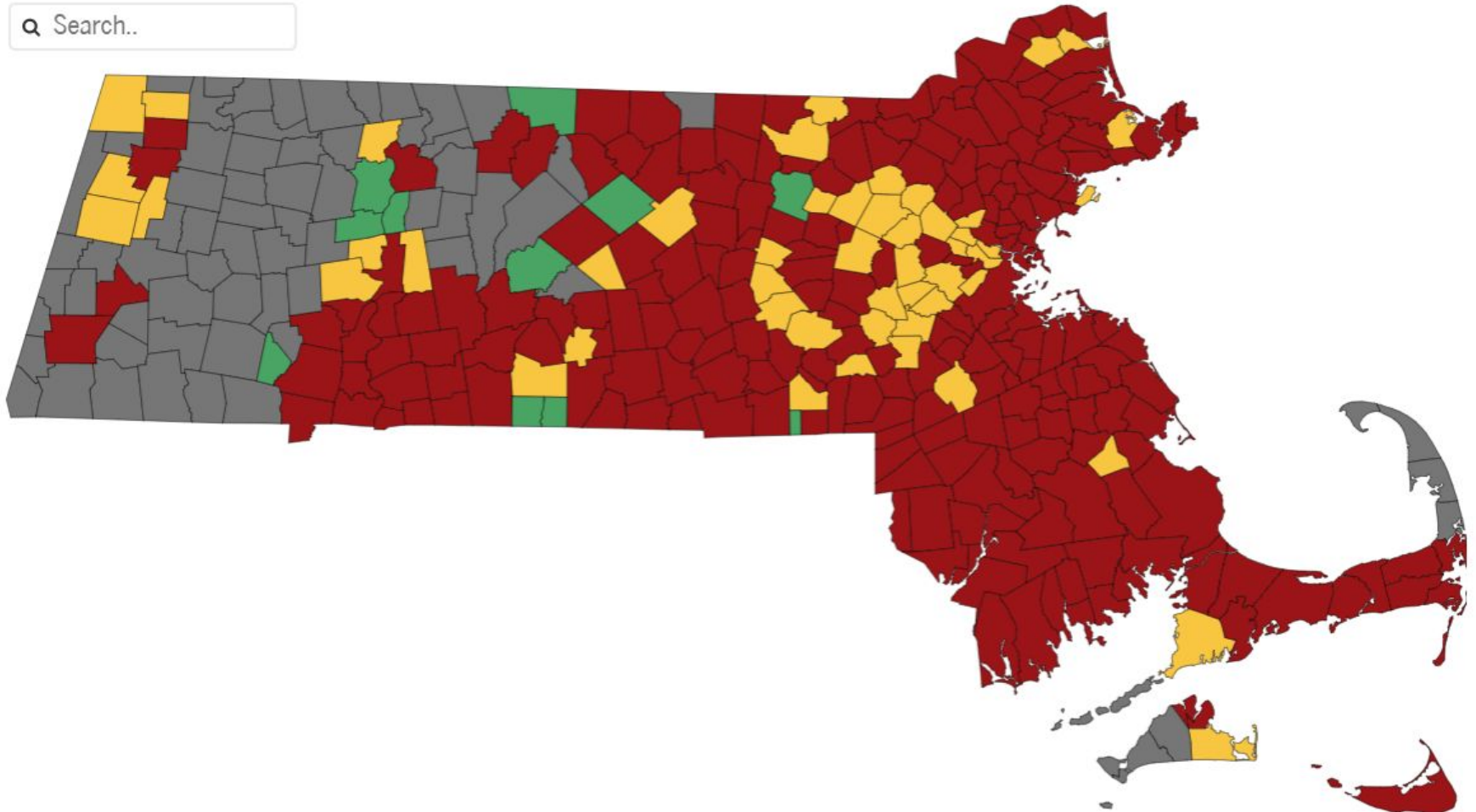
Source: Massachusetts Department of Public Health Weekly COVID-19 Data Reports

Massachusetts COVID-19 Risk Map

New cases from Dec. 20 to Jan. 2

■ Lowest risk ■ Lower risk ■ Moderate risk ■ High risk

Q Search..



Source: Boston Globe, January 7, 2021 (map); Massachusetts Department of Public Health Weekly Report (data).

Situational Update

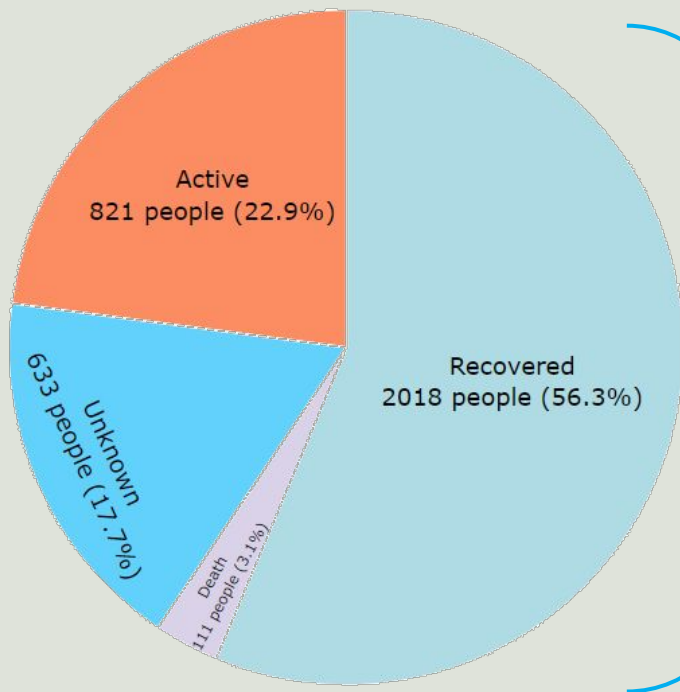
- **New infections** statewide and in Cambridge are at record levels. New COVID-19 cases increased 30% in the two weeks following Christmas, compared to the two weeks prior.
- **Hospitalizations**¹
 - Available non-ICU hospital beds in Metro West (incl. Cambridge) communities: **14.5%**
 - Available ICU hospital beds in Metro West communities: **21.6%**
- **Deaths**² — A total of 11 Cambridge residents have died from COVID-19 in December (9) and January (2) to date:
 - **Age:** 60s (4 residents); 70s (2 resident); 80s (4 residents); and 90s (1 resident)
 - **Place of Residence:** Private residence (6 residents); senior public housing (3 residents) and long-term care facilities (2 resident)

¹Massachusetts Department of Public Health Daily COVID-19 Data Report: January 10, 2021

²Cambridge Public Health Department data, as of January 10, 2021

Case Snapshot

In early January new infections statewide and in Cambridge reached their highest levels since the pandemic began.



3,583 Total Cases¹

(confirmed, probable and suspect)

- 3,289 in the community
- 294 cases in long-term cares

111 Deaths¹

- 66% of deaths were among LTC residents

Active Cases¹

- 23% of all cases are active

29.5 Confirmed Cases per 100,000¹

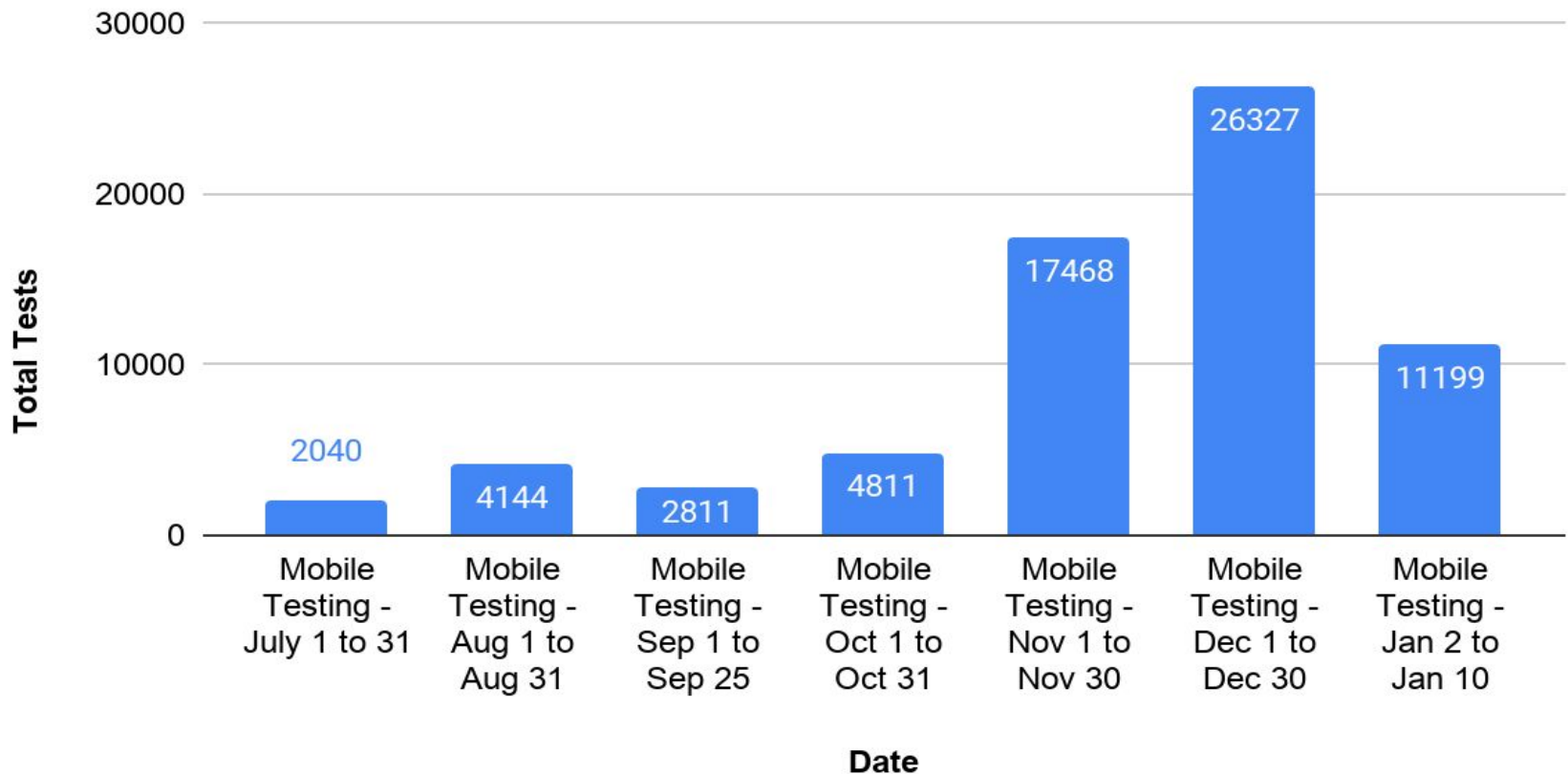
(7-day average for Jan. 3–Jan 9)

Test Positivity²

- 1.79% (2-week period ending Jan. 2)

COVID-19 Community Testing

Community Testing - Total Tests per Month



COVID-19 Vaccine Update



PHASE ONE

In order of priority

- Clinical and non-clinical healthcare workers doing direct and COVID-facing care
- Long term care facilities, rest homes and assisted living facilities
- First responders (EMS, Fire, Police)
- Congregate care settings (including corrections and shelters)
- Home-based healthcare workers
- Healthcare workers doing non-COVID-facing care



PHASE TWO

In order of priority

- Individuals with 2+ comorbidities and/or age 75+ (high risk for COVID-19 complications)
- Early education and K-12 workers, transit, grocery, utility, food and agriculture, sanitation, public works and public health workers
- Adults 65+
- Individuals with one comorbidity



PHASE THREE

Vaccine available to general public

December - February

Estimated timeframes

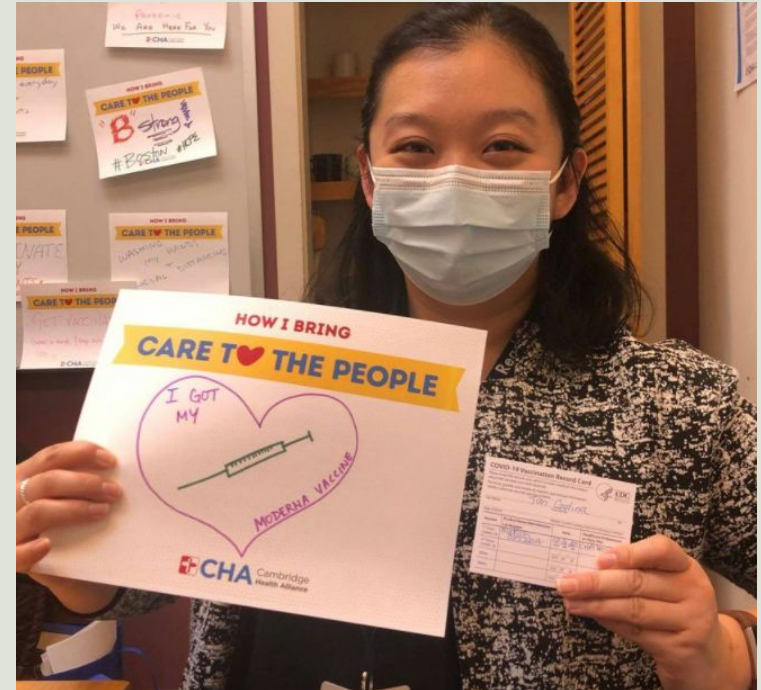
February - April

April - June

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

PHASE 1

- **Health care worker and long-term care facility** vaccinations continue.
- **First Responders**
 - **Operation Nightingale:**
Vaccinate 1,000 first responders, Jan. 11–15, 12–6 p.m.
 - **Goal:** 30 vaccines/hour; 180/day.
- **Remaining Phase 1 Priority Groups:**
 - Congregate Care Sites (e.g., homeless shelters, jails)
 - Home-based health care workers.
 - Health care workers not doing COVID care.
 - Dates TBD by the State.



A Cambridge Health Alliance physician promotes the COVID-19 vaccine.

COVID Vaccine Communications

- **Goal:** Increase trust in a COVID vaccine resulting in a high percentage of vaccine participation by residents.
- **Approach:** Multi-phase communication strategy beginning in January 2021 (through Fall 2021):
 - Audience Segmentation (communities of color; older adults; etc)
 - Multiple Messages (trust, safety, importance of continued vigilance after vaccine)
 - Multiple Channels (based upon demographics): social media; door-to-door/grassroots campaign; community forums/town hall; City website
 - All Hands-on Deck: (trusted community leaders, residents and key influencers)

COVID Vaccine Communications

- **Jan.–Feb. 2021**
 - **Vaccine Call Center**
 - Fully staffed to take resident inquiries on all aspects of vaccine distribution and administration; Call Center will continue to take COVID testing inquiries
 - **Formative Research/Community Engagement**
 - Conduct interviews with key community influencers and liaisons
 - Conduct focus groups with community members
 - Communities of color; immigrant communities and other populations at greater risk for COVID and who face barriers to vaccine (trust, access, etc.)
 - Research: Best messages, messengers, graphics, and distribution channels; allay concerns; increase trust in the vaccine; and ensure greater uptake of the vaccine.

Cambridge Public Schools

Updated COVID-19 Health and Safety Framework

- On Jan. 5, the School Committee approved the district's updated health and safety recommendations, based on the ***Schools and the Path to Zero*** framework.
- Decision-making for school closure/openings will focus more on in-school transmission and infection control metrics, less on community infection rates.
- 3-ft distancing in classrooms for younger students (preschool–grade 5)
- New surveillance testing program for students in grades 6-12; explore options for testing younger students.
- Strengthening communication and training of students, staff, and families on infection control procedures.

COVID-19 Testing in K-12 Schools

CPS staff are being tested twice a week, on a voluntary basis, as part of a CPHD surveillance program. Testing is also offered to symptomatic students who become ill at school and student athletes.

9,428 Tests

Tests administered to CPS staff through the voluntary testing program since Oct. 15 (as of Jan. 8)

8.3X

Median number of times a CPS staff member has gotten tested through the program since Oct. 15

1,132 Staff Tested

Total # of CPS staff who have been tested through the voluntary testing program since Oct. 15

241 students

Symptomatic CPS students who have been tested through the program since Oct. 15, and student athletes

Data reflect Oct. 15- Jan. 8

Expert Advisory Panel Update

January 7, 2021 Meeting Agenda

- Clinical and Case/Surveillance Data
 - *Hospital Updates*
 - *MWRA Sewage Data*
- UK Variant
- Communicating Vaccine Safety
- Mask Distribution
- Schools and Path to Zero Framework

